



# San Antonio Police Department

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**Date: November 5, 2003**

**Release No. 03-140**

## ***NEWS RELEASE***

### ***OFFICER -INVOLVED SHOOTING***

On 11-05-03, at approximately 1:55am, San Antonio Police ROP (Repeat Offenders Project) Detectives were in the area of IH 10W and Wurzbach Rd when they saw a Green Suzuki Tracker driving in and out of different parking lots, acting suspicious. Due to the high incidents of car burglaries and other property crimes, the Detectives decided to place the vehicle under surveillance. The Detectives followed the suspect vehicle E/B on IH 10W and then S/B on Loop 410 before the suspect vehicle exited Marbach Rd and headed W/B. The suspect vehicle was then seen parking in a car wash stall, located at 9677 Marbach Rd. At that point, ROP Detectives decided to set up stationary surveillance. The Detectives report that suddenly the passenger side door opened and the passenger was seen running into the Diamond Shamrock, which was located next door to the car wash at 9685 Marbach Rd. The Detectives also saw the suspect place a "Halloween" type of mask over his head just prior to running into the store. Realizing that a robbery was in progress, Detectives immediately started to converge on the scene/suspects. At that time, the suspect exited the store and was confronted by a customer who was entering the store parking lot. Detectives report that they heard a "pop" and thought the suspect fired a shot towards the witness. That witness was not injured.

The suspect was able to run back towards the suspect vehicle, where the second suspect waited in the drivers seat. After the suspect got into the passenger side, the suspect vehicle headed towards the parking lot exit, where they were confronted with several ROP vehicles. The suspect vehicle struck one ROP vehicle, which caused the suspect car to stop. At that point, the passenger got out of the suspect car and pointed his handgun directly towards the ROP Detective, who was exiting his vehicle. The suspect then turned and ran towards the rear of the suspect car, where he confronted Sgt. John Gruchacz, a 26-year SAPD veteran. Sgt. Gruchacz reports that the suspect pointed his weapon directly towards him and that he was in fear for his life and fired several shots towards the suspect. The suspect was hit several times and went down and was taken into custody. The second suspect, driver, was placed into custody without incident.

The shot suspect was taken by EMS to Wilford Hall Hospital where he is being treated for gunshot wounds. The identity of both suspects is being withheld pending formal charges of Aggravated Robbery and Attempt to Commit Capital Murder.

The San Antonio Police Department's Shooting Team will be conducting the investigation and will forward its findings to the Chief of Police and The Bexar County District Attorney's Office. Sgt. Gruchacz will be placed on Administrative Leave/Duty, which is standard in all officer-involved shootings.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**